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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 001039

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/20/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KCOR](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [NG](#)

SUBJECT: PRO-FORMER PM HAMA AMADOU SUPPORT RALLY DRAWS THOUSANDS; EVENT PROCEEDS PEACEFULLY

REF: A. NIAMEY 00632
[1B.](#) NIAMEY 1028

Classified By: CDA E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

[¶1.](#) (C) According to Embassy Niamey observers, on October 19, the

Mouvement National de la Societe de Developpement (MNSD) held a large rally for several thousand members at the Place de la Concertation, an open-air public square in Niamey from approximately 0900) 1130 (Ref A). The event speakers called for the release of former Prime Minister Hama Amadou from prison, where he has been since June 26, 2008 (Ref B).

[¶2.](#) (C) The participants dispersed following the rally in a peaceful manner; although there were reports of plans for demonstrations or a possible march, neither took place.

Embassy employees learned that the pro-Amadou group had sought a parade permit, but none was issued.

[¶3.](#) (C) Numerous Embassy employees reported no evidence of heightened tensions in Niamey, either on October 19 or 20, although some did notice a higher than usual number of police in city streets on the morning of October 19.

[¶4.](#) (C) Embassy sources indicated that the MNSD will hold party leadership elections on October 25 at the Palais des Congres to elect both a new president and possibly a secretary general.

[¶5.](#) (C) Comment: October 25 will mark the four-month imprisonment of Amadou, with followers appearing to become increasingly dismayed with his apparent marginalization from the anticipated 2009 presidential election. Some partisans regard his continued detention as a selective prosecution at a time when the GON has not released an electoral calendar for 2009. During the week of October 13-17, the judiciary replaced four individuals on the prosecution team, a move seen by some as an effort to strengthen the GON's case against him. Finally, Embassy believes some pro-Amadou elements had expected clemency during the Eid al-Fitr in early October, which did not occur. End comment.

WHITAKER